

SNAPSHOT
National Diabetes Education Program
*Survey of the Public's Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
Related to Diabetes*

Research has shown that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed, so recognizing the risk factors for diabetes is critically important. In its second [*Survey of the Public's Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Related to Diabetes*](#) in 2008, the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) learned that while many people are aware of diabetes risk factors such as being overweight and physically inactive, people do not recognize their personal risk for type 2 diabetes. To help raise awareness of people's risk for diabetes, NDEP is urging Americans to take the diabetes risk test in observance of American Diabetes Association Alert DaySM on March 23.

THE SURVEY:

NDEP conducted the second survey August – November 2008, following a 2006 survey, to track changes in:

- The public's awareness of diabetes and pre-diabetes and their personal risk factors;
- Attitudes, knowledge, and practices related to diabetes; and
- Awareness of risk for diabetes among at-risk groups.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Less than one-third (29 percent) of respondents at high risk for diabetes (based on self-reported height and weight) reported feeling at increased risk.*
- Among respondents reporting having been told that they have pre-diabetes (a condition that places them at increased risk for diabetes), less than two-thirds (64 percent) report feeling at risk.*
- Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of respondents who reported feeling at risk for diabetes say they do so because they have a family history of diabetes. (up from 60 percent in the 2006 NDEP survey)
- Two-thirds of respondents (68 percent) report that being overweight increases a person's risk for diabetes. (up from 55 percent in the 2006 NDEP survey)

Additional trends from NDEP's 2006 and 2008 surveys show that more people are aware of diabetes risk factors, however the data suggest the awareness is not translating into action, particularly when it comes to preventing or delaying type 2 diabetes:

- The proportion of survey respondents who report that diabetes can be prevented increased significantly between 2006 and 2008, from 64 percent to 71 percent respectively.
- The proportion of survey respondents who have heard of the condition, pre-diabetes, increased from 45 percent in 2006 to 51 percent in 2008.
- The public is aware that diabetes is very serious (85 percent, no significant change from 2006).

METHODOLOGY:

From August through November 2008, NDEP conducted a second survey of the public's knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to diabetes. The first such survey was conducted in 2006, and the survey sample was nationally representative of the U.S. adult population 45 years of age and older and living in telephone households. Because the rate of type 2 diabetes is growing fastest among those 35 to 44 years old, this age group was added to the 2008 survey.

*See [*Executive Summary*](#) for explanation of "at risk" and "with pre-diabetes."